REMARKS

A new drawing sheet is attached wherein the missing numeral 36 appears in Fig. 3. It was mistakenly left out in the preparation of the drawings in the International Application forming the basis of the present utility application. The wavy connecting line between the guide element and the reference numeral is visible in the Fig. 3 of the International Application as filed but the numeral 36 itself was unfortunately erased. A replacement sheet is submitted herewith including the erroneously omitted reference numeral.

Claims 1 and 4 of 20 May 2009 have been rejected under 35 USC §103 based on US 3 358 167 (to Shanks) in view of US 6 254 318 (to Sica).
Remedy to these objections by the Examiner is proposed by a new main claim which delimits the scope more clearly or the cited prior art.

The new single claim emphasizes the distinguishing features of the invention which provide its surprising advantages over the prior art. The new claim incorporates previous claims 1 and 4.
One main difference between the cited prior art and the present invention is that the second end part of the spacer has a plurality of outwardly radially-projecting lugs distributed around the circumference of the spacer with intermediate spacing between them. Not only can the end surface of the outer tube make contact with the lugs, in order to facilitate the assembly of the outer tube and the end cap when assembling the fluorescent lamp, the intermediate spaces between the lugs allow adhesive filler to easily fill out the gaps between the lugs, providing effective grip and cohesion between the outer tube, the end cap and the axial spacer. This advantage is not provided or indicated in either of the cited documents Shanks or Sica (not Hammer). It is submitted that the present invention, as now more carefully defined in the Claim, provides for easy centering of the main tube and the outer tube in relation to the end cap.

This difference has the effect, during the assembly, that the main tube having the spacer comprising the guide elements will center the main tube coaxially in the outer tube at the same time as a joining layer of insulating paste can be applied easily filling the gaps between the guide elements for joining the spacer with the outer tube. Even though Shanks shows centering of the main tube and the outer tube, the outer tube must be inserted in the slot and there are no lugs and gaps between them provided by the guide elements, These gaps according to the new claim provided for easy admission of adhesive paste and strong grip and adhesion when it hardens.

These distinguishing features make it extremely easy to correctly place and fix the component parts to each other in the assembly of the fluorescent lamp.

We would maintain the arguments presented in the previous response regarding the non-obvious advantages of the present invention over previously cited prior art r.
In the event there are any questions concerning this Amendment, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

No additional fees are believed to be due at this time beyond the 1 month extension fee. However, if necessary to effect a timely response the Commissioner is authorised to deduct the necessary fees from Deposit account No. 501249.

Respectfully submitted,

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